

SPORTS

GBSSAA JUNIOR BOYS VOLLEYBALL:

- WHATS AT STAKE IN THE FINAL WEEK?
- DIVISIONAL TITLE, AWARD BATTLES AND PLAY-OFF MATCHUPS

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It is hard to fathom that one month of exhilarating high school volleyball has already passed us by.

With less than two weeks until the play-off begins, the road to the championship will soon commence and the underdogs crave their chance to, potentially, take down a 'Goliath.'

As September came to an end, it is a logical time to reflect upon the 2017 High School Volleyball Season so far and examine the period that has been defined by polarity.

So, every season there are things that surprise not just the so-called experts like myself, but the volleyball fans in general.

Plenty of eyebrows have been raised and through the first three weeks, these are the biggest surprises we've seen thus far.

TABERNACLE BAPTIST (4-1)

It seems like the Falcons have emerged, seemingly out of nowhere to turn into the team to beat. But let's not fool ourselves - we should have known Coach Jeffery Dakari would build a giant.

Newcomer Dennard Adderley, showed flashes with promise this year and an effective offense paired with tall blockers is almost always the recipe for success and it's playing out before our eyes in Grand Bahama.

Honestly, it shouldn't be much of a shock. This is a roster laden with talent from top to bottom.

High school volleyball fans are

visual learners. We don't take anything seriously until we see it in the flesh. Knocking off pre-season favorite Bishop Michael in their last game on Friday (October 6) 21-15, 21-19 and handing former #1 ranked Lucaya International their first loss 12-21, 21-17, 16-14 -propelled the Falcons into the local spotlight, and thus solidifying what many Falcons' followers already knew: this is a team capable of winning a junior boys' title.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR WATCHLIST

Here's a glance at several mid-season standouts on the radar for Grand Bahama Sports.com Junior Volleyball Player of the Year watch list:

Criteria to be considered on the POY watch list includes performance on the court, overall contribution to the team's success and talent, and skills (volleyball specific).

This is a mid-season POY watch list. If a player is not on the POY watch list, it does not mean they are excluded from consideration.

Tabernacle Baptist: Dennard Adderley

Lucaya International: Nick Lane

Sunland Baptist: Raymond Clarke

Bishop Michael: Orxavier Saint, Gabriel Laing

HERE'S WHAT TO WATCH IN THE FINAL WEEK ...

I'm not going to say the final week of the regular season will be anti-climactic, but there's a good chance the final week of the regular season will be anti-climactic. Four teams have clinched the play-offs and the

other two have better than 99 percent odds to win the top seed. Battle for top seed

The No.1 Tabernacle Baptist junior boys are one game up on the No.2 Lucaya International and No.3 Sunland Baptist, and can clinch the top seed with a win over Sunland Baptist in the season finale on Friday, October 13, 2017.

Here are the final-week schedules:

Falcons (4-1): Stingers (13th)
Buccaneers (3-1): Panthers (10th), Wildcats (13th)
Stingers (3-1): Warriors (10th), Falcons (13th)

WORST OVERALL RECORD

It's a fight to the finish. While there doesn't appear to be an appearance at the big dance in volleyball playoffs, if you're rough year, you hope not to finish with the worst record. Two teams have a chance:

Blue Jays: 0-4
Panthers: 0-4

And just when you thought you had nothing to play for, the Blue Jays and Panthers will face each other in the season finale. Couldn't have a better script than that.

GAMES LEFT

Wednesday, October 11, 2017
3:45 p.m. @ STGHS - #4. BMES (3-2) vs #3. SBA (3-1) (JB)

4:00 p.m. @ STGHS - #7. SMPR (0-3) vs #2. LIS (3-1) (JB)

3:45 p.m. @ JHHS - #6. EMRH (0-4) vs #5. JHH (2-2) (JB)

Friday, October 13, 2017
3:45 p.m. @ STGHS - SMPR vs EMRHS (JB)

4:15 p.m. @ STGHS - SBA vs

TBCA (JB)
3:45 p.m. @ JHHS - LIS vs JHH (JB)
4:15 p.m. @ JHHS - LIS vs JHHS (SB)

GRAND BAHAMA SPORTS.COM JUNIOR BOYS VOLLEYBALL RANKING (6/10/2017)

1. Tabernacle Baptist (4-1)
2. Lucaya International (3-1)
3. Sunland Baptist (3-1)
4. Bishop Michael (3-2)
5. Jack Hayward (2-2)
6. Eight Mile Rock (0-4)
7. Sister Mary (0-4)

GBSSAA SENIOR BOYS VOLLEYBALL REPORT CARD: THE FAVORITES, CONTENDERS, CINDERELLAS AND PLAYERS TO WATCH AS THE PLAYOFFS APPROACHES

All the talk about jockeying for seeds will be over this upcoming week, as we enter the final week of the regular season in the GBSSAA Senior Boys' Volleyball Season. In order to go far in the volleyball play-offs, a team has to perform on the court and after Friday, the play-off picture will be set.

The questions are numerous. Can someone knock off the defending champion, Tabernacle Baptist? Who will be this year's Cinderella team? Will the reigning Player of the Year, McKell Bethel, be a candidate for Player of the Year once again and finally hoist the banner? Only time will tell.

Below we take an in-depth look at the schedule for the final week of the season.

SCHEDULE

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

4:15 p.m. @ STGHS - BMES (2-3) vs SBA (2-2) (SB)

4:30p.m. @ STGHS - STGHS (3-1) vs LIS (1-3) (SB)

4:00 p.m. @ JHHS - EMRH (0-4) vs JHHS (2-2) (SB)

Friday, October 13, 2017

4:45 p.m. @ STGHS - STGHS vs EMRHS (SB)

4:30 p.m. @ STGHS - SBA vs TBCA (SB)

4:15 p.m. @ JHHS - LIS vs JHHS (SB)

FAVORITES

No.1 Tabernacle Baptist
It's hard to say the Falcons are not once again the favorites, even if they haven't looked quite as dominant as they did in years past. Led by Joshua Dames, Kianno Miller, outside hitters' Shequille Higgs and Brandon Wilchcombe, the Falcons might not be as talented at the top as they were last year, but they could be deeper. Coach Jeffery Dakari has gotten contributions from a host of boys.

CONTENDERS

No.2 St. Georges
Will the real Jaguars please stand up? The Jaguars have looked fantastic in some matches and lackluster in others. Evidently, those are the perils of having a young team. Colon Smith has been the savior this season and one of the top players. The lack of experience, though, could end up biting Coach Kenton Rolle team at some point.

SLEEPERS

No. 3 Jack Hayward
The Wildcats defend and pass so well that they're not going to give any team an easy time. Outside hitter McKell Bethel is superb and G. Ferguson can all

play. It's a team effort down in 'Wildcats' Nation.'

PLAYERS TO WATCH

JUSTIN BIAGDOM, TY DAWKINS, BMES

In 2016, Justin Bigdom was the best at his position as setter in the city. This past season, Ty Dawkins was top notch. Dawkins has shown he can play on that level and if he does in the postseason, BMES has a great chance to become a Cinderella.

KIANNO MILLER, JOSHUA DAMES, TBCA

The Falcons have been looking for another hitting threat alongside Joshua Dames all season. Well, it could end up being right in front of them. Kianno Miller has all the tools to make a serious impact in the play-offs. If he and Dames are firing on all cylinders, watch out for Tabby.

OH, MCKELL BETHEL, JHH

If McKell Bethel plays anything like he did against Sunland last week, the Wildcats are going to be a problem. One of the things Coach Desmond Hall has been looking for all season is someone who can put the ball down consistently. Bethel is one of the most powerful hitters in the leagues, his swing is mechanically sound, and he finds open spots masterfully.

GRAND BAHAMA SPORTS.COM SENIOR BOYS VOLLEYBALL RANKING (6/10/2017)

1. Tabernacle Baptist (4-0)
2. St. Georges (3-1)
3. Jack Hayward (2-2)
4. Sunland Baptist (2-2)
5. Bishop Michael (2-3)
6. Lucaya International (1-3)
7. Eight Mile Rock (0-4)

SPORTS MINISTER PINTARD HAS OPPORTUNITY TO DIRECT GREATER BALANCE OF GOVT. FUNDING

\$11.2 million on World Relays inspires debate

Last Wednesday (October 4) in the House of Assembly, Minister of Finance K. Peter Turnquest presented many compelling figures to the nation. He took listeners down a scary path and made it clear that his job in leading the way for the country to put its financial house in order, will be an extremely tough one.

One of the bills that was paid in June, concerned the World Relays. The amount was \$11.2 million. The figure will no doubt bring about a great debate within the national sports fraternity.

Was it worth it for a country, struggling financially, to put out such an enormous amount with very little revenue return in comparison?

I pointed out many times in this space, the fact that The Bahamas, through the three International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) World Relays hosted here (2014, 2015, 2017), has been a financial sweet spot for the universal parent body for track and field.

I doubt The Bahamas got any percentage at all of the television rights. I have been informed that approximately \$20 million were shelled out by the Government of The Bahamas for the inaugural World Relays. That figure dropped to around a net loss of \$2 million for the second edition of the World Relays and then of course, there is the \$11.2 million the Finance Minister disclosed last week.

The sports host reputation of The Bahamas has been greatly enhanced by the World Relays, but there was always the nagging concern about profit shares. The previous government, through the sports ministry, concentrated on landing the mega international events.

It is now up to the present administration to ensure that hosting is accompanied by a profit. This must be the way.

Sports Minister, Michael Pin-

"I pointed out many times in this space, the fact that The Bahamas, through the three International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) World Relays hosted here (2014, 2015, 2017), has been a financial sweet spot for the universal parent body for track and field."

SPORTS SCOPE

By Fred Sturup



MICHAEL PINTARD
Minister of Youth,
Sports and Culture

The organizational mechanism is on point. The template is defined and Bahamian personnel are now well-versed in coordinating the relays to the satisfaction of the IAAF.

With Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis directing a national tightening of budgets in various government agencies, the spending for events such as the 2019 IAAF World Relays and the CARIFTA Games, coming up in 2018, must be circumspect. We must be cautious in advancing sports funding. Whatever fund-

tard, has the opportunity to really begin crafting a rather nice legacy. If he can steer the

process whereby The Bahamas shows a profit from hosting the 2019 IAAF World Relays, he

would have succeeded in upgrading what had come before. Everything else is in place.

GOLF BREWERY SERIES TO CONCLUDE

Earlier in the year The Bahamas Golf Federation (BGF), the Bahamian Brewery and Beverage Co. Ltd (Sands Beer) inaugurated the First Sands Beer Cup Golf Series, which will award prizes to golfers who consistently perform well in BGF sponsored tournaments during the year.

For 2017 six tournaments were scheduled to be played over 11 rounds on courses in Nassau, Freeport and Exuma. The event started with the Grand Bahama Open in March and will conclude with the Albany Classic on October 13, when the winner of the Sands Beer Cup will be crowned.

The Cup will go to the golfer with the most points from his best six rounds.

Prizes will be awarded to the first, second and third places plus winners and runner-ups in various divisions.

The rules are very simple. In order to win the Cup, the golfer must be a member of the BGF and must have played in at least six of the 11 rounds of golf. Scoring is on a Modified Net Stapleford basis, which allows points per hole based on net scores. However, the maximum handicap allowed is 24. Also, there must be a minimum of six players in each division in order to qualify for a prize.

Richard Gibson Jr., started strong and led the field for most of the year. Unfortunately, he did not play in the recent event, The Paradise Island Open, and was overtaken by Ural Pratt and Marvin

Bethell, who finished strong by winning their divisions and are now in first and second places with scores of 192 and 187, respectively.

Gibson is now in third with 182 followed by Allan Gardner 179 in fourth and Oswald Moore and Ambrose Gouthro tied for fifth at 177.

Gibson still leads the Gross Division with 172, followed by Oren Butler in second with 164, Peter McIntosh in third at 151, Lynford Miller and Simon Fielder fourth and fifth with 144 and 142, respectively.

Pratt also leads the Mid-Amateur Division with 192 points followed by Ian Howard in second with 178, Gaston Lampron third with 174, Chris Gouth-

ro fourth with 159 and Peter McIntosh is tied with Lynford Miller for fifth at 158.

Finally, Marvin Bethell is top of the leaderboard in the Super Senior Division with 187 points, followed in second by Allan Gardner 179, third is Oswald Moore and, Ambrose Gouthro 177 and Jeff Morasco fifth with 167

The finishing event at Albany on October 13 promises to be an exciting event as players' battle to win the Prestigious Sands Beer Cup.

Golfers also have the opportunity to win prizes in both the Albany Classic and the Sands Beer Cup. This is a fundraising event for the BGF and all golfers are encouraged to come out and support the Federation.